

REMARKS

Claims 1 – 17 are pending in the application.

The Examiner has objected to the drawings, and a proposed drawing correction Fig. 1a is presented to show the feature of claim 8, namely a base with apertures, as well as the feature of claim 10, namely a base as a separate component connected to the outer portion.

Claim 1 has been amended, and now defines a heat-conducting support (also known as a heating mantle or a thermal adapter, as indicated on page 4 of the specification, lines 7 and 8) which comprises an inner portion 21, an outer portion 24, and a base 26 for placement on a heating element, wherein the inner portion 21 has no apertures and is concavely curved to support a vessel having a round or curved bottom, wherein furthermore the outer portion 24 adjoins the inner portion 21, and the outer portion extends away from the upper location 25, where the inner and outer portions adjoin, toward the base 26, where the outer portion merges with the base.

A new claim 17 that further defines the heating element has also been added.

The Examiner has rejected claim 1 of the instant application as being anticipated by either of the Cruickshank references, namely Cruickshank '323 and Cruickshank '868. However, Applicant respectfully submits that such a rejection is not warranted, especially in view of the amendment to claim 1.

In contrast to amended claim 1 of the instant application, which requires an inner portion that has no apertures, Cruickshank '323 has an inner portion that is provided

with apertures, while Cruickshank '868 has an inner portion that is provided with openings, and in particular openings that are fitted with deflectors or covers.

A further distinction between the cited references and claim 1 of the instant application is that neither Cruickshank '323 nor Cruickshank '868 is intended to support a vessel having a round or curved bottom, as required by Applicant's claim 1. In particular, the cited references are intended for a flat-bottomed cooking vessel, since these references intend to provide an air chamber between the underside of the cooking vessel and that portion of the heat distributor plate disposed immediately beneath the cooking vessel (see Cruickshank '323, page 1, lines 104 – 110, and Cruickshank '868, page 2, lines 19 – 33). Cruickshank '868 furthermore discusses the purpose of its openings and deflectors or covers, namely for preventing heated air and flame from coming into direct contact with the underside of the cooking vessel (see page 1, lines 48 – 51, and 94 – 99, as well as page 2, lines 1 – 6). Thus, it can be seen that the Cruickshank references clearly heat by convection, whereas the heat-conducting support of claim 1 of the instant application operates primarily by conduction (see also the top of page 6 of the specification of the instant application). This is a critical distinction between the present invention and the cited references, and is brought about by the different structure of the present invention in contrast to the apertured configuration of the cited references.

In view of the foregoing discussion, and the amendment to claim 1, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the allowability of the claims of the present application. In other respects, Applicant has attempted to be fully responsive to the

outstanding Office Action. However, should the Examiner have any further comments or suggestions, the undersigned would very much welcome a telephone call from him in order to resolve any outstanding issues and to bring the application into condition for allowance.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert W. Becker". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE:

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Amended) A heat-conducting support for a round or curved bottom vessel, comprising:

a metallic unit having an inner portion, an outer portion, and a base for placement on a heating element;

wherein said inner portion has no apertures and is concavely curved to support a vessel having a round or curved bottom;

wherein said outer portion adjoins said inner portion at an upper location remote from a bottom of said inner portion; and

wherein said outer portion extends away from said upper location of said inner portion toward said base and merges with said base.

17. (New) A heat-conducting support according to claim 1, wherein said heating element is an electrical hot plate having a flat surface.